

Social Questions Bulletin

The Methodist Federation for Social Action, an unofficial membership organization, seeks to deepen within the Church, the sense of social obligation and opportunity to study, from the Christian point of view, social problems and their solutions and to promote social action in the spirit of Jesus. The Federation stands for the complete abolition of war. The Federation rejects the method of the struggle for profit as the economic base for society and seeks to replace it with social-economic planning to develop a society without class or group discriminations and privileges. In seeking these objectives the Federation does not commit its members to any specific program, but remains an inspirational and educational agency, proposing social changes by democratic decision, not by violence.

Volume 45-50

JANUARY, 1955-60

Number 1

HAS RELIGION BEEN INVESTIGATED?

By ROYAL WILBUR FRANCE

In all the publicity during the past year concerning the actions and utterances of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, two very important events have gone unnoticed, or without sufficient discussion of their meaning, by the religious press.

The first of these is that for the first time in the 15 years of its existence, the 1953 Report of the Committee contains a section on religion. This is the camel's nose of state interference with religion, inside the tent.

The second meaningful event is that in the section on religion, the Committee makes a flat statement which its published record of hearings just as flatly contradicts. This statement covers the camel's shoulders as they follow its nose into the tent. Here it is: "The House Committee on Un-American Activities has conducted no investigation of subversive infiltration of the clergy or religion and no such investigation is contemplated."

What does the record show? In September, 1953, headlines were shouting across the country "600 Clergymen Called Members of Communist Plot." The occasion was the release by the Un-American Activities Committee of the testimony of paid ex-Communist witnesses in five closed sessions in the previous July. The alleged conspiracy was to destroy religion by communist infiltration and replace it with atheism.

The first question asked of the first witness, called for "names of those involved in a conspiracy of the Communist Party among the clergy." The last question of the last witness asked for "A summary of the overall manner in which the communists have attempted to infiltrate and poison the religious organizations of America wherever possible." In between were 20 questions like these: "When did the communist infiltration of religion become a major policy of the Communist Party in the United States? Did the communists infiltrate the Methodist Church? Did the Social Action Movement adopt a program for the infiltration of religion?"

The 270 pages of the record cover the activities of religious organizations, the histories of religious movements, speeches and writings of ministers and rabbis, religious books and publications, even the nature of religion.

There is no escaping the conclusion that the Committee's statement that it "has conducted no investigation of subversive infiltration of the churches or religion . . ." is the direct opposite of the facts.

What then does the Committee do in its Report about this investigation it denies having conducted? In the section on religion it cites this record as authority for blanket statements about the proportion of clergy who are "case hardened communists . . . fellow travelers . . . communist sympathizers . . . associated with communist causes." But never uses the word investigation. It has "sworn testimony" in its possession. "The official record establishes . . ." But there was no investigation!

Yet immediately after the denial there comes this: "The Committee has proceeded in its investigations (our emphasis) on the premise that a member of the Communist Party enjoys no immunity from investigation regardless of his rank or calling."

This is one of the partial truths that does the work of a whole lie. Of the 270 pages of the Hearings on Communist infiltration of religion, 87 are given to an attempt to prove that certain

religious organizations were not only themselves infiltrated but were the instruments for infiltrating religion in the interest of the alleged communist conspiracy to destroy it.

The Committee further attempts to cover its denial of investigating this matter by reducing the five days of hearings, with their direct questions about infiltration, to the mere reception of testimony. The Foreword of the report says that a subcommittee in New York City investigating communist infiltration of labor "received considerable testimony relative to the efforts of the Communist Party to infiltrate religious groups." The record shows that at 4 o'clock on July 6, the Committee adjourned the labor hearing, went into executive session, and started questioning a witness about communist infiltration of religion. This enquiry continued for two days thereafter and again on July 13 and 14. The Committee prints its hearings under two heads: "Testimony of . . ." and "Investigation of . . ." The record of these hearings appears under the title "Investigation (our emphasis) of Communist Activities in the New York area, Parts 5, 6, 7, 8." Highlights of them are under the same title in the Committee Report. One of the highlights is that the Committee "received information," from ex-communists "concerning the communists' efforts to infiltrate the fields of entertainment, education, labor and government. If these hearings were only reception of testimony then the Committee has misinformed the House and misled the public. It has also exceeded its authority since it is authorized only to conduct investigations, not to hear and publish one-sided testimony.

In answer to criticism from "religious quarters" for releasing such testimony, the Committee adds to its denial of any investigation another contradiction of the record. It says it cannot coach witnesses nor alter voluntary testimony.

Voluntary? At \$25 a day and expenses. Not coached? Two of these witnesses had been heard at other times. They had never mentioned religion. One had written a book, another two, on their experiences as communists. In neither was religion discussed. Two witnesses presented voluminous excerpts from periodicals, covering a number of years and filling many pages of the record. This took long preparation.

The closing question of the record calls for a summary of the "overall manner" in which the conspiracy to destroy religion was conducted. The answer shows a planned procedure which has become clear as the questions and testimony went forward. One witness tried to show how a plot to destroy religion by infiltration was hatched in Moscow, others how it was carried on here through certain organizations, and then to identify the clerical leaders as members of the Communist Party. This was plainly according to plan. If committee counsel and staff did not plan it, somebody else did.

Progressively, Rev. Stephen Fritchman, Bishop Oxnham, Rev. Jack McMichael and Rev. John Hutchinson, like scores of educators and labor leaders, have protested to the Committee that its procedure is not to discover the truth but to make a case. Now that a strong reaction rises against this kind of action, the Committee makes a denial which is a natural development from playing fast and loose with truth by talking about not investigating religion but exposing communists in the religious world.

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WHICH FUTURE: WAR OR PEACE?

By ERNEST T. WEIR*

On the political side, Western Europe now asserts and will continue to assert the right to a much stronger voice in international affairs. Since the war, the relationship of the United States to Europe has been, in the main, that of leader to follower. Europe will now insist not only on a more equal status but also on recognition of the right to a European viewpoint that may differ from the United States viewpoint. And, in my opinion, this also will be good both for Europe and the United States. In fact, it is the development of this situation that caused me to say at the outset that the world outlook is now so much more hopeful and promising.

THE PEOPLE DEMAND PEACE

The objective of the countries of Western Europe—every country—is peace, not war. It is the objective because that is what the great mass of people in every country demand . . . and, in my opinion, are determined to have. Europe believes peace is possible and it is convinced that the people of Communist countries are just as strongly opposed to war as the people in the Western World. And because of that, Western Europe believes that a way can be worked out to live with Russia and China on a basis of peace. Now there, of course, is where the rub comes in. This is where Europe differs so sharply from those who argue for a “tough” policy in the United States. But this is what Europe believes and this is the line that Europe is going to follow.

I place this emphasis on Western European policy for two reasons. First, in and of itself, it is something that the United States must take into account. Second, it raises the question of whether a similar policy is not also the right one for the United States. For my part, I definitely believe it is. Let us take a look at some of the reasons for this belief.

NO NATION DARES TO HAVE WAR

The first reason . . . the reason of fundamental importance is that today no nation dares to have a war. President Eisenhower indicated what the consequences would be in his proposal for peaceful development of atomic power and on other occasions. People who have inside knowledge of the new weapons have spoken plainly about their terrible potential for destruction.

An example is Thomas E. Murray, member of the Atomic Energy Commission, who by virtue of his position is thoroughly familiar with all the facts. He recently said this:

“I consider it . . . the sober truth to say that atomic energy has resulted in the greatest change in man's relations with nature since the fateful day in the Garden of Eden . . . Man has within his grasp an unlimited force, the very source of all energy in nature, atomic energy . . . The difficulty is that this force is a potential equally for death as for life . . . The misuse of atomic energy means death on a scale that staggers the imagination.”

Now this is known fully in every nation . . . by leaders and people. Russia, for instance, has gone to quite some length to educate its people to the meaning of the H-bomb and has emphasized that NO nation can escape destruction. And that, of course, is a fact that is generally accepted. After a nuclear war, the so-called victor would find himself presiding over a world that had been reduced to a heap of cinders.

Nevertheless, so long as the world's most powerful nations deal with each other on a continuing basis of distrust and hostility, there is always the danger that there will be an incident or a small war that will grow into the Big War. I firmly believe that if the Big War comes, at some point one side or the other will drop the bomb. Then the fat will be in the fire.

LIVE TOGETHER OR DIE TOGETHER

As Bertrand Russell put it recently, the only real choice that the people of the world have today is that choice: To live together or to die together. The fact is that war has moved to such extreme levels of destructive power that it has lost whatever excuse it ever had as an instrument of international policy. Every nation knows this. I believe it would have a most salutary effect if the principal nations acknowledge it. I would

like to see the United States, England, France and Russia meet together and subscribe to a declaration formally pledging the renunciation of war as an instrument of policy.

These are the nations which have the technical knowledge, means and skill to produce and use atomic weapons. Each of them knows that against these weapons there is no defense . . . that the result of their use will be near-annihilation, near total destruction, for all involved. They know not only that what we now call **conventional** war is outmoded, but that war, itself, is now removed beyond the bounds of sanity. They know that they have only one recourse and that is—whatever their differences, they must settle them by the methods of peace. This being true, why should they not openly admit it—and openly renounce war. I believe that such a declaration by these four nations now in control of atomic energy would have constructive results that would be tremendous in scope throughout the world.

“CAN'T TRUST RUSSIA” ARGUMENT

In our country, when you talk about any agreement with Russia—or about any attempt to establish a living relationship between the Communist World and the Free World—you get the familiar objection: “How can we place confidence in Russia's word on anything?”

Remember what our ultimate choice is—to **LIVE** together or to **DIE** together. Those who follow the “You can't trust Russia” line are casting their vote for dying together. Their arguments all boil down to continuance of hostility and suspicion . . . of the warlike posture that surely will lead eventually to **ACTUAL** war.

Now, we must realize that to a large degree the basis for this position is the thought that Communism can be eliminated from the world. The fact is that war—the rejection of peaceful coexistence as the only other alternate—would not eliminate Communism. Communism is an idea. In all history, ideas have **never** been changed or driven from the minds of men by force. Force has simply served to strengthen and spread ideas.

MAINTAIN ADEQUATE MILITARY DEFENSES

The other position . . . the one I advocate . . . is simply this: Let us keep in mind the difficulty of dealing with Russia; let us not forget our past experiences, let us maintain thoroughly adequate military defenses . . . but, at the same time, let us make it plain to Russia and the world that our objective is peace . . . that we want to conduct international dealings and relationships by the methods of peace. There must be no war. We know it can solve no problem. Consequently, the objective must be peace.

Russia's attitude lately has been more conciliatory. She has been talking a great deal about “peaceful coexistence” not only for world consumption but also for the benefit of the Russian people. Now, there is no doubt that “peaceful coexistence” means something that is different to Russia than it is to us and other Western nations.

While in England I had a long talk on this subject with Christopher Mayhew, who is a member of Parliament and formerly was Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Under the English system, as you know, a man must be thoroughly qualified by previous training and experience to hold such a position in government. Mayhew is recognized as a particularly keen student of world affairs. He had recently returned from a trip to Russia in which one of his principal purposes was to get some understanding of just what the Russians mean by “coexistence.” He had talked with a great many people from the rank and file and also such Russian leaders as Malenkov, Molotov and Gromyko.

He came to these conclusions. The Russians are devoted to the ideas of Communism. They believe that Capitalism is bound to fail, that inevitably it will be replaced by Communism throughout the world, and that it should be. In view of this, they believe they have the right and the obligation to help speed the day by giving encouragement and support to Communism everywhere. They see nothing wrong with this and are surprised that

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BEHIND THE HEADLINES

As the old year was going out, the headlines were announcing decisions concerning the use and control of atomic and other new weapons which sharply challenge the position long taken by this organization, and recently by the World Council of Churches.

The decisions were made by the North Atlantic Council, and the foreign ministers of the Big Three who are its Standing Committee—the United States, Great Britain and France. The Council adopted a report by its military commanders which declared that these weapons were indispensable to the defense of Europe. The New York Times stated that the military commanders were authorized to make strategic plans based on the use of such weapons. On his return, Secretary of State Dulles reported that this decision covered only the smaller new weapons such as atomic cannon, guided missiles and planes, etc., and solely for tactical purposes.

This action was forecast by reports that such weapons had already been sent to the occupying allied forces in West Europe, and by supplying of Chiang Kai Shek with napalm to drop on ports and coastal cities of China. Dulles added that these weapons were now being produced at such a rate that they were rapidly on the way to becoming "conventional," and consequently any further war would be fought with them. He was confident that by their use the Allies could stop the enemy at the border and so avoid the later task of "liberation." How any border can be set to radio-activity he did not discuss.

By this verbal wiping out of the qualitative difference between present conventional and the smaller new weapons the ground is cleared for justification of the use of the A and H bombs for strategic purposes. The question was who was to decide when—the allied military command or the political governments. Theoretically the latter is required by nations calling themselves democracies. But practically a sudden attack might require the former. So, with reluctance by the smaller nations in NATO, the decision was that the die was to be cast by the governments, whenever practicable. It was realized that in sudden emergency this meant the United States, because of its heavier armament and the fact that Title 3 of the U. N. apparently gives any nation the right to respond to aggression "by such action as it deems necessary."

Thus the reliance upon positions of strength, which has substituted rearmament and the stockpiling of nuclear weapons for disarmament moves toward its fatal conclusion. Its camouflage is a cut in ground forces and so the arms budget, along with a poorly disguised second step toward universal military training. The churches which stand for the outlawry of all weapons of mass murder and destruction know that the course of human progress is "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit saith the Lord." What will they now do to make the word of God effective, and prevent their own declaration from becoming a dead letter?

While the decisions to rely upon the power of nuclear weapons were in the making, additional evidence of the consequences of using them appeared. United Press released an article which affirmed that "Atomic officials are worried by what they call 'radiation scare stories' forecasting the genetic doom of man—some biologists believe the addition (to this planet's radio-activity) has been enough—even if no further tests were held—to cause genetic damage that will increase the number of defective individuals born to future generations." The conclusion was that in an atomic war "all the horror stories ever written would be pale by comparison" because to the millions killed and maimed "the planet would bear a potentially lethal load of long-lasting radio-activity."

This is not mere speculation. It is based upon the reports of Japanese scientists, known in many lands, concerning the later results of our dropping A bombs there and of what our Bikini tests did to Japanese fishermen. Some of these results are mentioned in an appeal of prominent Japanese women, representing more than 20 million others who signed the petition, to the women of all lands to strive for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons, and for the immediate stopping of nuclear weapon experiments on the public seas.

The appeal states: "A medical survey of 11 women who were

pregnant at the time, and who were living within 1100 meters from the site of the explosion, showed that only one out of their 11 children examined at the age of five had a head of normal size and the other children had heads of about the size of a one year old baby. Their deformity is only one of the symptoms effected by the atomic bomb." Concerning the fishermen suffering from the Bikini explosion, "14 out of 23 patients are bachelors who have lost the desire to marry, because they are afraid of having deformed children affected by their radiation diseases."

Whose children are suffering from the sins of whose fathers? Our atomic officials were worried not by the suffering but lest it might stop future tests. As Jesus asked the scribes and Pharisees, how shall we escape the greater destruction that waits ahead for all who hear His words and do them not, unless we change our course? The churches have said that this is necessary. Now it is time for actions that will help to bring about the change.

H.F.W.

PEACE GARDEN

She labored for peace, which the whole world needs.

She thought of a unique plan:

To plant a fair garden where once were weeds

And have on display for MAN

God's beautiful flowers, in varied hues,

Sweetwilliams, forget-me-nots,

Petunias and pansies—reds, yellows, and blues—

Commingle in friendly plots.

Then the sun and the rain did a wonder rare,

And God did some guiding, grand;

And after the blossoms the seeds were there,

In reach of her waiting hand.

She gathered. She packaged them carefully;

She sent them as love—gifts small

To near lands, and far lands, over the sea,

As symbols of peace for all.

And this the request she has often made,

"Give seeds in exchange for mine;

Till in many gardens of every grade

There will in togetherness twine

Gay flowers of Asia and Africa,

Of Lemont and Samarkand—

The patterns for pax humanica

To be in this whole earth-land."

REV. HAROLD J. BASS,

Pastor, St. Paul's Methodist Church,
Tacoma, Washington.

Former missionary in Korea.

The poem, "Peace Garden," was composed by Federationist Harold Bass, in honor of the unique and internationally recognized Peace Garden efforts of Federationist Mary Phillips. Her work was on display in connection with the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Evanston last summer. If you would like flower seeds from distant lands in exchange for your own, or the booklet on how to grow your own peace garden, or a pen-pal from some particular land, then write Mrs. Phillips, c/o Peace Garden, R. F. D. No. 1, Lemont, Illinois. And write us about YOUR efforts or projects for peace.

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WHICH FUTURE: WAR OR PEACE?

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we do. They think it is entirely compatible with "peaceful coexistence." Nevertheless, and this is highly important, Mayhew is convinced that they have come to the definite conclusion that forcible means up to and including war are an instrument of no value in promoting Communism. And in this context, they are completely sincere in their talk about "peaceful coexistence."

IT MIGHT BECOME PERMANENT

Mayhew pointed out that the Western nations should welcome this new Russian approach because if it is put into effect and continues for a time it stands a good chance of becoming permanent.

In other words, it is his idea—and it is the idea in Europe generally—that we should seize the opportunity to convert the present basis of cold war with its ever-present danger of hot war—a Hydrogen Bomb war—to the basis of peaceful competition between different ideologies and systems of government. And it is also the idea that as part of this competition, we should promote to the greatest extent possible interrelations between the Communist World and the Free World—including trade relations as one of the most important elements.

TWO FORCES OF ENORMOUS POWER

In my mind, at least, there is not the slightest doubt as to the outcome of such a competition. I am so thoroughly convinced of the rightness of our basic principles and ideals that I believe they will prevail—not in a few years or few decades, perhaps, but certainly over the long pull. With a basis of competition from which the threat of war is removed, two forces of enormous power work on the side of enduring peace. They are the passage of time and the operation of the universal human longing for peace, security and better conditions of life. Certainly, these forces can work to better effect under a condition approaching normal international relations than under the present condition in which the Communist World—with one-third of the world's people—is hermetically sealed against the influence of Western thought and ideals and its way of life.

Develop a more open situation; let peace continue for awhile and it will be most difficult for the leaders of any nation to take their people into a war. Mayhew was deeply impressed with the fact that in Russia the openly expressed fear of war and the yearning for peace among people of all kinds were even more pronounced than in the West. The same thing impressed another acquaintance of mine, William R. Matthews, publisher of the Arizona Daily Star, who last year visited countries behind the Iron Curtain for the third time. He said that "peace" was the word that he heard most often wherever he went. He believed that the people of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Russia, itself, could be induced to fight only in the event of actual invasion.

Frequently, we hear it said that the people in Communist countries have no influence; that they do as they are told. Yet we know that keeping the people sold on governments and their policies is a major job of Communist leaders and one at which they work around the clock. These leaders never forget that they CAME to power as the result of revolution. They know that if they go against widespread and deeply-held desires of the people, they can also be THROWN out of power by revolution. There is little question that peace is the No. 1 desire of people in Communist countries as it is in the rest of the world. And that is the best basis for the reasonable hope that a divided world can live together—coexist, if you will—without war.

WORLD'S MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECT

Gentlemen, I fully realize that this subject of war and peace is not the most cheerful one. But it is by far the most important one before the world today. In fact, unless it is resolved in the right way, no other subject can have any genuine and permanent importance whatever. It will do us no good to pretend that this problem is not in existence. Or to lull ourselves with the belief that if we sit still and ignore it, it will somehow dry up and blow away. This problem will not solve itself. We must solve it. By "we" I do not mean just the President, or the State Department, or the Congress. I mean you and the State Department, or the Congress. I mean you and I and the other fellow working for a firm and clear national policy with the objective of world peace.

There can be no such national policy without widespread public recognition of its need and strong public support. Recognition and support will not develop spontaneously. They must be generated by individuals—in Cleveland and throughout the country—who have the vision to see this problem in its full meaning and the public spirit to do something about it. Such individuals as the men here tonight. And there is not one of you who cannot do something about it . . . something effective. At minimum, you can let your representatives in government know where you stand. You can initiate the discussion, the thrashing out, the coming to conclusions on this subject at everything from small home groups to large gatherings. In short—in the broad meaning of the term—you can take political action.

* Mr. Weir is chairman of the National Steel Corporation, the country's fifth largest. On the basis of knowledge and convictions gained through frequent trips to Western Europe, Mr. Weir is a strong worker for world peace, as this Bulletin has pointed out in the past. The present article is the substance of a recent address before the Cleveland Engineering Society, as reprinted in I. F. Stone's Weekly.

UMT FIGHT IS WITH US AGAIN

The strong stand of official Methodism against Universal Military Training in any form or disguise, was firmly reiterated in the recent annual meetings of the Woman's Division of Christian Service and of the Board of World Peace. The Bishops of the Church had spoken out earlier (see December Bulletin for text of their unequivocal statement).

This is all in response to current Administration efforts (with strong congressional support) to put over in this session of Congress the unprecedented program in the U. S. A. of permanent, peace-time U.M.T.

That program has been defeated in the past and can be defeated again—but only with the widest and most determined efforts of churchmen now. If you agree that the very costly UMT program will harm our youth and will (along with rearming Germany) further reverse recent trends towards easing international tensions and reducing the threat of war—you should lose no time in urging your congressman and senators to work against the current Administration UMT plan, and any other plans for UMT in any guise.

REMEMBER THE FEDERATION IN YOUR WILL!

Dr. George Albert Coe wanted the prophetic educational work of the Methodist Federation for Social Action to continue through the fateful years ahead, and so he did something about it. He remembered the Federation generously in his will. That was the beginning of MFSA's Educational Fund, which greatly needs enlarging. Why not follow Dr. Coe's good example by acting now to put the Federation in YOUR will in whatever possible amount? You could word the bequest: I give and bequeath to the Methodist Federation for Social Action (Box 327, Gresham, Oregon, Headquarters address), the sum of \$_____ (or: _____ per cent of my estate), to be used in its educational work.

M.F.S.A. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS

Dr. Loyd F. Worley, Methodist Federation for Social Action president, called the quarterly meeting of the M.F.S.A. Executive Committee for January 31, in Chicago, at the Y.W.C.A., 59 East Monroe St., from 2 to 10 p. m. Watch for latter report of the Committee actions.

HAS RELIGION BEEN INVESTIGATED?

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The denial is completely destroyed by the committee's own record. The question is whether the procedure thus exposed is to be continued. If it is, government continues on a course of repression based on misinformation, and religion is progressively deprived of the free exercise of all its functions guaranteed by the Constitution. These disasters can be prevented. Organize religion has the power. The changing national temper and new session of Congress offer the opportunity. Will it be used?

* Dr. Royal Wilbur France, distinguished lawyer, grew up in a Presbyterian parsonage. He is a graduate of Hamilton College and was for 23 years professor at Rollins College.